

By: Clardy, Isaac, Branch, Paddie

H.B. No. 3662

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the Texas Workforce Innovation Needs Program;
authorizing a fee.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.922 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.922. TEXAS WORKFORCE INNOVATION NEEDS PROGRAM. (a)

In this section:

(1) "Private or independent institution of higher education" has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

(2) "Program" means the Texas Workforce Innovation Needs Program.

(b) The Texas Workforce Innovation Needs Program is established to:

(1) provide selected school districts, public institutions of higher education, and private or independent institutions of higher education with the opportunity to establish innovative programs designed to prepare students for careers for which there is demand in this state; and

(2) use the results of those programs to inform the governor, legislature, and commissioner concerning methods for transforming public education and higher education in this state by improving student learning and career preparedness.

(c) To apply to participate in the program, a school

1 district, public institution of higher education, or private or
2 independent institution of higher education must use the form and
3 apply in the time and manner established by commissioner rule. The
4 application process must require each applicant district or
5 institution of higher education to submit a detailed plan as
6 required by Subsections (d) and (e) of the instruction and
7 accountability the applicant would provide under the program.

8 (d) A plan submitted under Subsection (c):

9 (1) must:

10 (A) be designed to support improved instruction
11 of and learning by students and provide evidence of the accurate
12 assessment of the quality of learning on campus;

13 (B) describe any waiver of an applicable
14 prohibition, requirement, or restriction for which the district or
15 institution of higher education intends to apply; and

16 (C) include any other information required by
17 commissioner rule; and

18 (2) may, if submitted by a school district, designate
19 one or more campuses rather than the entire district to participate
20 in the program.

21 (e) In addition to satisfying the requirements under
22 Subsection (d)(1), a plan submitted under Subsection (c) must, to
23 the greatest extent appropriate for the grade or higher education
24 levels served under the program, either:

25 (1) focus on engagement of students in
26 competency-based learning as necessary to earn postsecondary
27 credentials, including:

1 (A) career and technical certificates;

2 (B) associate's degrees;

3 (C) bachelor's degrees; and

4 (D) graduate degrees; or

5 (2) incorporate career and technical courses into dual
6 enrollment courses or into the early college education program
7 under Section 29.908 to provide students the opportunity to earn a
8 career or technical certificate or associate's degree.

9 (f) From among the school districts and institutions of
10 higher education that apply as required under this section, the
11 commissioner shall select those school districts and institutions
12 of higher education that present the plans that are most likely to
13 be effective in producing the next generation of higher performing
14 public schools and institutions of higher education that provide
15 education and training in an innovative form and manner to prepare
16 students for careers for which there is demand in this state.

17 (g) The commissioner shall convene program leaders
18 periodically to discuss methods to transform learning
19 opportunities for all students, build cross-institution support
20 systems and training, and share best practices tools and processes.

21 (h) A school district or institution of higher education
22 participating in the program or the commissioner may, for purposes
23 of this section, accept gifts, grants, or donations from any
24 source, including a private or governmental entity.

25 (i) To cover the costs of administering the program, the
26 commissioner may charge a fee to a school district or institution of
27 higher education participating in the program.

1 (j) In consultation with interested school districts,
2 institutions of higher education, and other appropriate interested
3 persons, the commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary for
4 purposes of this section.

5 (k) Not later than December 1, 2014, and not later than
6 December 1, 2016, with the assistance of school districts and
7 institutions of higher education participating in the program, the
8 commissioner shall submit to the governor and the legislature
9 reports concerning the performance and progress of the program
10 participants. The report submitted not later than December 1,
11 2014, must include any recommendation by the commissioner
12 concerning legislative authorization necessary for the
13 commissioner to waive a prohibition, requirement, or restriction
14 that applies to a program participant and other school district or
15 institution of higher education interested in beginning a similar
16 program. To prepare for implementation of a commissioner waiver,
17 the commissioner shall seek any necessary federal waiver. This
18 subsection expires January 1, 2020.

19 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
20 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
21 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
22 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
23 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.